

# Introduction

## Introduction

Protecting water quality and the forest and soil resources on the land are among the most important aspects of a successful and environmentally sustainable timber harvest. Studies have shown that while timber harvesting is not a major cause of water quality problems, skid trails, haul roads and landings have the potential to be sources of sedimentation, erosion and siltation of streams and other water bodies. Forest management programs and operations should incorporate adequate measures to provide for proper soil and water conservation. Most streams originating in or flowing through our timberlands are sources for water supplies, recreation, and a wealth of other uses.

The key to success is proper planning and the use of appropriate, or “best” management practices (BMPs). These are practices chosen to reduce erosion and prevent or control pollution resulting from forestry operations. Forestry BMPs are directed primarily to control erosion.

This field guide is intended to be a practical tool for timber harvesters, forest managers and landowners. It presents suggestions, guidelines and technical references on a range of timber harvesting BMPs.

# Introduction

*The guide is not meant to replace on-the-ground recommendations by a qualified professional forester or resource professional and should not be used as a substitute.*

The ultimate goal is to have an economically viable timber harvest that protects the soil, water and other forest resources from loss or degradation. BMPs can help attain this goal. *Alternative methods that achieve equal water quality protection are acceptable.*

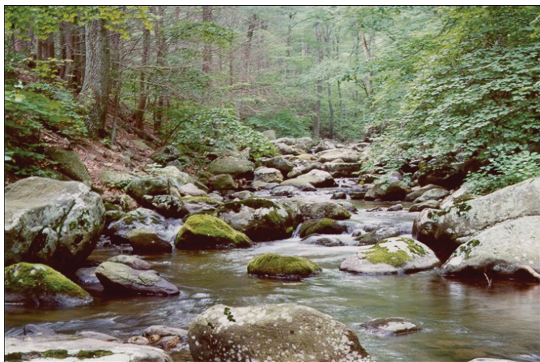
Nonpoint source pollution is generated from land runoff resulting from precipitation. As the runoff moves over the land surface, it picks up and carries away natural and manmade pollutants and deposits them into waterways, wetlands and groundwater, damaging fish habitats and spawning areas, and making the water unsuitable for other uses downstream.

## **Planning is the Key**

It is almost always more economical to plan timber harvesting activities in advance and to take preventive measures than it is to try to “fix” problems after they occur. It is intended that the suggestions outlined in this

# Introduction

field guide, if followed, will minimize the impact from timber harvesting on the waters of the Commonwealth and will provide a viable forest resource for the future of all Virginians.



# Introduction

